

## Appendix A.

# Concepts and Definitions for Data Derived from the Current Population Survey

Tables showing labor force status include provisional estimates of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and over as well as data on the civilian labor force, labor force participation rates, and unemployment rates. Population estimates are revised by the Bureau of the Census each year, and the revised estimates are incorporated into the CPS labor force levels. This adjustment affects the estimates of labor force, employment, and unemployment but does not affect percentages such as unemployment rates, participation rates, or employment-population ratios. Thus, levels contained in this publication may not be comparable to levels published in earlier (or subsequent) *Geographic Profiles*.

The concepts and definitions underlying labor force data in use as of January 1994 are as follows:

*Civilian noninstitutional population.* Included are persons 16 years of age and older residing in the 50 States and the District of Columbia who are not inmates of institutions (e.g., penal and mental facilities, homes for the aged) and who are not on active duty in the Armed Forces.

*Employed persons.* All persons who, during the reference week, (a) did any work at all (at least 1 hour) as paid employees, worked in their own business or profession or on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in an enterprise operated by a member of the family, and (b) were not working but had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, bad weather, child-care problems, maternity or paternity leave, labor-management dispute, job training, or other family or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid for the time off or were seeking other jobs.

*Unemployed persons.* All persons who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find employment some time during the 4 week period ending with the reference week. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed.

*Duration of unemployment.* This represents the length of time (through the current reference week) that persons classified

as unemployed had been looking for work. For persons on layoff, duration of unemployment represents the number of full weeks they had been on layoff.

*Reason for unemployment.* Unemployment is also categorized according to the status of individuals at the time they began to look for work. The reasons for unemployment are divided into five major groups: (1) *Job losers*, comprised of (a) persons on temporary layoff, who have been given a date to return to work or who expect to return within 6 months (persons on layoff need not be looking for work to qualify as unemployed), and (b) *permanent job losers*, whose employment ended involuntarily and who began looking for work; (2) *Job leavers*, persons who quit or otherwise terminated their employment voluntarily and immediately began looking for work; (3) *Persons who completed temporary jobs* (included along with job losers in this publication), who began looking for work after the jobs ended; (4) *Reentrants*, persons who previously worked but were out of the labor force prior to beginning their job search; and (5) *New entrants*, persons who never worked.

*Labor force.* This group comprises all persons classified as employed or unemployed in accordance with the criteria described above.

*Unemployment rate.* The unemployment rate represents the number unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

*Participation rate.* This represents the proportion of the population that is in the labor force.

*Employment-population ratio.* This represents the proportion of the population that is employed.

*Occupation and industry.* This information for the employed applies to the job held in the reference week. Persons with two or more jobs are classified in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours. The unemployed are classified according to their last job. The occupational and industrial classification of CPS data is based on the coding systems used in the 1990 census.

*Hours of work.* These statistics relate to the actual number of hours worked during the reference week. For example, persons who normally work 40 hours a week but were off on the Columbus Day holiday would be reported as working 32 hours, even though they were paid for the holiday. For persons working in more than one job, the figures relate to the number of hours worked in all jobs during the week; all the hours are credited to the major job.

*At work part time for economic reasons.* Sometimes referred to as involuntary part time, this category refers to individuals who gave an economic reason for working 1 to 34 hours during the reference week. Economic reasons include slack work or unfavorable business conditions, inability to find full-time work, and seasonal declines in demand. Those who usually work part time must also indicate that they want and are available to work full time to be classified as on part time for economic reasons.

*At work part time for noneconomic reasons.* This group includes those persons who usually work part time and were at work 1 to 34 hours during the reference week for a noneconomic reason. Noneconomic reasons include, for example: Illness or other medical limitations, child-care problems or other family or personal obligations, school or training, retirement or Social Security limits on earnings, and being in a job where full-time work is less than 35 hours. The group also includes those who gave an economic reason for usually working 1 to 34 hours but said they do not want to work full time or were unavailable for such work.

*Usual full- or part-time status.* Data on persons “at work” exclude persons who were temporarily absent from a job and

therefore classified in the zero-hours-worked category, “with a job but not at work.” These are persons who were absent from their jobs for the entire week for such reasons as bad weather, child-care problems, maternity or paternity leave, vacation, illness, or involvement in a labor dispute. In order to differentiate a person’s normal schedule from their activity during the reference week, persons are also classified according to their usual full- or part-time status. In this context, *full-time workers* are those who usually worked 35 hours or more (at all jobs combined). This group will include some individuals who worked less than 35 hours in the reference week for either economic or noneconomic reasons and those who are temporarily absent from work. Similarly, *part-time workers* are those who usually work less than 35 hours per week (at all jobs), regardless of the number of hours worked in the reference week. This may include some individuals who actually worked more than 34 hours in the reference week, as well as those who are temporarily absent from work.

*White, black, and other.* These are terms used to describe the race of persons. Included in the “other” group are American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Asians and Pacific Islanders. Because of the relatively small sample size in most areas, data for “other” races are not published. In the enumeration process, race is determined by the household respondent.

*Hispanic origin.* This refers to persons who identified themselves in the survey enumeration process as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or of other Hispanic origin or descent. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race; thus, they are included in both the white and black population groups.